

HYBRID VEHICLE AND METHOD FOR CONTROLLING THE SAME

Background of the Invention

1. Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a hybrid vehicle having an engine and a primary motor as a drive source for running the vehicle, and a secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle, and a method for controlling the hybrid
10 vehicle.

2. Description of the Related Art

 Hybrid vehicles are known in which a running motor is connected to main driving wheels which are driven by
15 an engine, or in which a running motor is connected to sub driving wheels which are disconnected from the engine. In these hybrid vehicles, fuel consumption can be saved by driving the running motor singly to run the vehicle, by running the vehicle while causing the running motor
20 to assist the engine in driving the vehicle, or by causing the running motor to function as a generator to perform a regenerative braking operation when the vehicle is decelerated so that kinetic energy of the vehicle is reclaimed and stored as electric energy.

25 Incidentally, with a view to saving the fuel

consumption further, in case an engine "idling Stop" control is adopted to stop the engine when the vehicle comes to a stop, the compressor for the air conditioner and the hydraulic pump which are driven by the engine
5 are also stopped, which leads to problems that the comfortableness of passengers in the vehicle is deteriorated while the idling stop is being implemented and that the rise of oil pressure is delayed when the vehicle is started from rest, whereby a smooth start of
10 the vehicle is interrupted.

Then, it is conceived that auxiliary units such as the compressor and the hydraulic pump which are driven by the engine in related art are driven by auxiliary unit motors. However, in case an inverter is needed for each
15 auxiliary unit motor, several inverters need to be provided in addition to one for the running motor. With the aforesaid related-art hybrid vehicle, however, since an electric oil pump is needed in addition to the oil pump driven by the engine, there is caused a problem that
20 the number of components, costs, space and weight are increased.

Summary of the Invention

The invention was made in view of these situations,
25 and an object thereof is to provide a hybrid vehicle and

a method for controlling the hybrid vehicle, the hybrid vehicle comprising a primary motor as a drive source for running the vehicle and a secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle, wherein the number of inverters for driving the primary and secondary motors is reduced so as to reduce the number of components, costs, space and weight.

With a view to attaining the object, according to a first aspect of the invention, there is proposed a hybrid vehicle comprising an engine and a primary motor as a drive source for running the vehicle, a secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle, and a switching unit for controlling the primary motor and the secondary motor via a common inverter.

According to the construction, by provision of the switching unit for controlling the primary motor as the drive source for running the vehicle and the secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle via the common inverter, the primary and secondary motors can be driven by the common inverter, which can contribute to the reduction in the number of components, costs, space and weight.

In addition, according to a second aspect of the invention, there is proposed a hybrid vehicle as set forth

in the first aspect of the invention, wherein the secondary motor is an auxiliary unit driving motor.

According to the construction, since the secondary motor is the auxiliary unit driving motor, the auxiliary unit can be driven by the secondary motor without any problem.

Additionally, according to a third aspect of the invention, there is proposed a hybrid vehicle as set forth in the second aspect of the invention, wherein in the event that the secondary motor is required to be driven while the vehicle is being driven by the primary motor with the engine being stopped, the inverter is switched to drive the secondary motor by the switching unit after the engine has been started up and the primary motor has been stopped.

According to the construction, in the event that the secondary motor is required to be driven while the vehicle is being driven by the primary motor with the engine being stopped, since the inverter is switched to drive the secondary motor by the switching unit after the engine has been started up and the primary motor has been stopped, the secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle can be driven by the inverter without any problem while the vehicle is being run by the engine in place of the

primary motor.

In addition, according to a fourth aspect of the invention, there is proposed a hybrid vehicle as set forth in the first aspect of the invention, wherein in the event
5 that the primary motor is required to be driven while an auxiliary unit is being driven by the secondary motor, the inverter is switched to drive the primary motor by the switching unit after the secondary motor has been stopped, and the auxiliary unit which has been driven
10 by the secondary motor is then driven by the engine.

According to the construction, in the event that the primary motor is required to be driven while an auxiliary unit is being driven by the secondary motor, since the inverter is switched to drive the primary motor
15 by the switching unit after the secondary motor has been stopped and the auxiliary unit which has been driven by the secondary motor is then driven by the engine, the auxiliary unit can be driven by the engine without any problem while the primary motor is driven by the inverter
20 so as to run the vehicle.

Additionally, according to a fifth aspect of the invention, there is proposed a hybrid vehicle as set forth in the second aspect of the invention, wherein the secondary motor is at least any of a motor for driving
25 a compressor for an air conditioner, a motor for driving

an oil pump, and a motor for starting up the engine.

According to the construction, since the secondary motor is at least any of a motor for driving a compressor for an air conditioner, a motor for driving an oil pump, and a motor for starting up the engine, air conditioning, generating an oil pressure or starting up the engine can be implemented by the secondary motor.

Note that a running motor M1 in an embodiment corresponds to the primary motor of the invention, an auxiliary unit motor M2 in the embodiment corresponds to the secondary motor in the invention, and a changeover switch S in the embodiment corresponds to the switching unit in the invention.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Fig. 1 is a diagram showing an overall configuration of a power train for a hybrid vehicle according to a first embodiment;

Fig. 2 is a flowchart showing a changeover from a running motor to an auxiliary unit motor;

Fig. 3 is a flowchart showing a changeover from the auxiliary unit motor to the running motor;

Fig. 4 is a diagram showing an overall configuration of a power train for a hybrid vehicle according to a second embodiment;

Fig. 5 is a diagram showing an overall configuration of a power train for a hybrid vehicle according to a third embodiment;

Fig. 6 is a flowchart showing a changeover from the auxiliary unit motor to the running motor;

Fig. 7 is a flowchart showing a changeover from the running motor to the auxiliary unit motor;

Fig. 8 is a diagram showing an overall configuration of a power train for a hybrid vehicle according to a fourth embodiment; and

Fig. 9 is a flowchart showing a changeover between an auxiliary unit motor and the running motor.

Detailed Description of the Invention

A mode for carrying out the invention will be described below based on an embodiment illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

Figs. 1 to 3 show a first embodiment of the invention, in which Fig. 1 is a diagram showing an overall configuration of a power train for a hybrid vehicle, Fig. 2 is a flowchart showing a changeover from a running motor to an auxiliary unit motor, and Fig. 3 is a flowchart showing a changeover from the auxiliary unit motor to the running motor.

As shown in Fig. 1, left and right front wheels Wf,

Wf of a vehicle V are connected to an engine E via a transmission to be driven thereby, and left and right rear wheels Wr, Wr thereof are connected to a running motor M1 to be driven thereby. A compressor C for an air
5 conditioner is connected to an engine crankshaft and an auxiliary unit motor M2, so that the compressor C can be driven by either of the engine crankshaft and the auxiliary unit motor M2. An inverter I for converting direct current of a battery B to three-phase alternating
10 current is selective connected to either of the running motor M1 and the auxiliary unit motor M2 via a changeover switch S.

Thus, when the vehicle V runs under low load, the engine E is stopped, and the vehicle V is driven by driving
15 the rear wheels Wr, Wr by the running motor M1, whereas when the vehicle V runs under high load, the vehicle V is driven not only by driving the front wheels Wf, Wf by the engine E but also by driving the rear wheels Wr, Wr by the running motor M1 as required, thus the running
20 motor M1 assisting the engine E in driving the vehicle V. In addition, when the vehicle V is decelerated, the running motor M1 is made to function as a generator, whereby kinetic energy of the vehicle V is reclaimed so as to be stored as electric energy for charging the battery
25 B.

Next, a changeover of driving modes from driving the running motor M1 to driving the auxiliary unit motor M2 will be described based on the flowchart in Fig. 2.

Firstly, when a command to switch on the air conditioner is outputted in step S1, if it is determined in step S2 that the running motor M1 can be stopped, then an action is taken to stop the running motor M1 in step S3. In the following step S4, if it is determined that a three-phase wire from the inverter I is not connected to the auxiliary unit motor M2 for driving the compressor C of the air conditioner by the changeover switch, the changeover switch S is activated, in step S5, so as to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the running motor M1 for connection to the auxiliary unit motor M2. Then, a command to activate the auxiliary unit motor M2 is outputted in step S6.

On the contrary, when it is determined in step S2 that the running motor M1 cannot be stopped, if the engine E is determined to be in operation in step S7, then, the compressor C for the air conditioner is driven by the engine E in step S8. In contrast, if the engine E is determined in step S7 that the engine E is not in operation, then, the engine E is started up in step S9, and thereafter, the compressor C for the air conditioner is driven by the engine E in step S8.

Next, a changeover of driving modes from driving the auxiliary unit motor M2 to driving the running motor M1 will be described based on the flowchart in Fig. 3.

Firstly, when a command to drive the running motor M1 is outputted in step S11, if it is determined in step S12 that the auxiliary unit motor M2 is in operation, an action is taken to stop the auxiliary unit motor M2 in step S13. If it is determined in the following step S14 that the three-phase wire from the inverter I is connected to the auxiliary unit motor M2 by the changeover switch S, then the changeover switch S is activated, in step S15, to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the auxiliary unit motor M2 for connection to the running motor M1.

If it is determined in the following step S16 that the engine E is being stopped, after the engine E is started up in step S17, an action is taken to drive the running motor M1 in step S18, and the compressor C for the air conditioner is driven by the engine E in step S19.

According to the first embodiment, since the inverter I for converting direct current of the battery B to three-phase alternating current can be selectively connected to either of the running motor M1 and the auxiliary unit motor M2 via the changeover switch S. Therefore, both the running motor M1 and the auxiliary

unit motor M2 can be driven by the common inverter I,
and when compared with a case where the running motor
M1 and the auxiliary unit motor M2 are driven by inverters
which are provided to be used exclusively therefore, the
5 number of components, assembling man hours, installation
space and costs can be reduced.

In addition, in the event that a command to switch
on the air conditioner is given while the vehicle V is
driven by the running motor M1 with the engine being stopped,
10 since the engine E is started up so as to drive the vehicle
V by driving force of the engine E, the inverter I can
be disconnected from the running motor M1, whereby the
inverter I can be connected to the auxiliary unit motor
M2 so as to allow the auxiliary unit motor M2 to drive
15 the compressor C, thereby making it possible to allow
the air conditioner to operate without any problem.

Furthermore, in the event that the running motor
M1 is required to be driven while the compressor C is
being driven by the auxiliary unit motor M2, after the
20 auxiliary unit motor M2 has been stopped, the inverter
I is disconnected from the auxiliary unit motor M2 by
the changeover switch S for connection to the running
motor M1, whereby the running motor M1 is driven without
any problem, and the vehicle V can be driven accordingly.
25 Then, the compressor C is driven by the engine E in place

of the auxiliary unit motor M2 which is then stopped, whereby the air conditioner is allowed to operate without any problem.

Next, a second embodiment of the invention will be
5 described based on Fig. 4.

While the front wheels Wf, Wf are driven by the engine E and the rear wheels Wr, Wr are driven by the running motor M1, in the first embodiment, in the second embodiment, the front wheels Wf, Wf are constructed to be driven by
10 the engine E and the running motor M1. Namely, the running motor M1 is disposed in line between the engine E and the transmission T, and, similarly to the first embodiment, the compressor C for the air conditioner is constructed to be driven by either of the engine E and the auxiliary
15 unit motor M2. Moreover, the inverter I can be selectively connected to the running motor M1 and the auxiliary unit motor M2 by the changeover switch S.

Consequently, in this embodiment, too, the vehicle V can be driven by the engine E and/or the running motor
20 M1, and the compressor C can be driven by the engine E or the auxiliary unit motor M2. The functions described by reference to the flowcharts shown in Figs. 2 and 3 can also be applied to this second embodiment as they are.

25 Next, a third embodiment of the invention will be

described based on Figs. 5 to 7.

As is clear from Fig. 5, the third embodiment is a modification to the first embodiment, and an oil pump P, instead of the compressor C of the air conditioner, is driven by the engine E or the auxiliary unit motor M2.

Next, a changeover of driving modes from driving the auxiliary unit motor M2 to driving the running motor M1 will be described based on a flowchart shown in Fig. 6.

Firstly, when a command to drive the running motor M1 is outputted in step S21, if it is determined in step S22 that the auxiliary unit motor M2 is being driven, an action to stop the auxiliary unit motor M2 is taken in step S23. If it is determined in the following step S24 that the three-phase wire from the inverter I is connected to the auxiliary unit motor M2 by the changeover switch S, then the changeover switch S is activated, in step S25, to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the auxiliary unit motor M2 for connection to the running motor M1.

If it is determined in the following step S26 that the engine E is being stopped, then, after the engine E is started up in step S27, the oil pump P is driven by the engine E in step S28, and the vehicle V is made

to continue to be driven by the running motor M1 in step S29.

Next, a changeover of driving modes from driving the running mode M1 to driving the auxiliary unit motor M2 will be described based on a flowchart shown in Fig. 7.

Firstly, if it is determined in step S31 that the engine E is being stopped from idling and if it is determined in step S32 that the running motor M1 is not being stopped, an action is taken to stop the running motor M1 in step S33. If it is determined in the following step S34 that the three-phase wire from the inverter I is not connected to the auxiliary unit motor M2 for driving the oil pump P by the changeover switch S, then, the changeover switch S is activated, in step S35, to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the running motor M1 for connection to the auxiliary unit motor M2. Then, a command to activate the auxiliary unit motor M2 is outputted so as to drive the oil pump P in step S36.

Thus, in this third embodiment, too, a function and advantage which are similar to those provided by the first and second embodiments can also be attained.

Next, a fourth embodiment of the invention will be described based on Figs. 8 and 9.

As is clear from Fig. 8, the fourth embodiment is a modification to the first embodiment, and in this embodiment, in place of the auxiliary unit motor M2 for driving the compressor C for the air conditioner, an auxiliary unit motor M2 for cranking up the engine E to start it up is provided between the engine E and the transmission T.

Next, a changeover of driving modes between driving the running motor M1 and driving the auxiliary unit motor M2 will be described based on a flowchart shown in Fig. 9.

Firstly, if it is determined in step S41 that the engine is being stopped from idling and when a command to start up the engine E is outputted in step S42, if it is determined in step S43 that the three-phase wire from the inverter I is connected to the running motor M1, then, the changeover switch S is activated, in step S44, to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the running motor M1 for connection to the auxiliary unit motor M2. Then, the engine is cranked up to be started up by the auxiliary unit motor M2 in step S45.

On the contrary, if it is determined in step S41 that the engine is not stopped from idling, when a command to drive the running motor M1 is outputted in step S46, and if it is determined in step S47 that the three-phase

wire from the inverter I is not connected to the running motor M1, then the changeover switch S is activate, in step S48, to disconnect the three-phase wire from the inverter I from the auxiliary unit motor M2 for connection
5 to the running motor M1. Then, the running motor M1 is driven to drive the vehicle V in step S49.

Thus, in this fourth embodiment, too, a function and advantage which are similar to those provided by the first to third embodiments can also be attained.

10 Thus, while the embodiment of the invention have been described heretofore, the invention can be modified in various ways with respect to designs without departing from the spirit and scope thereof.

For example, while, in the embodiments, the motor
15 for driving the compressor for the air conditioner, the motor for driving the oil pump and the motor for cranking up the engine are illustrated as the auxiliary unit motor M2, the auxiliary unit motor M2 may be used for any other purposes, and the secondary motor of the invention may
20 constitute any other motors than the auxiliary unit motor M2 provided that the secondary motor does not constitute the running motor M1.

According to the construction, by provision of the switching unit for controlling the primary motor as the
25 drive source for running the vehicle and the secondary

motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle via the common inverter, the primary and secondary motors can be driven by the common inverter, which can contribute to the reduction in the number of components, costs, space and weight.

In addition, according to the second aspect of the invention, since the secondary motor is the auxiliary unit driving motor, the auxiliary unit can be driven by the secondary motor without any problem.

10 Additionally, according to the third aspect of the invention, in the event that the secondary motor is required to be driven while the vehicle is being driven by the primary motor with the engine being stopped, since the inverter is switched to drive the secondary motor by the switching unit after the engine has been started up and the primary motor has been stopped, the secondary motor used for any other purposes than as the drive source for running the vehicle can be driven by the inverter without any problem while the vehicle is being run by the engine in place of the primary motor.

20 In addition, according to the fourth aspect of the invention, in the event that the primary motor is required to be driven while an auxiliary unit is being driven by the secondary motor, since the inverter is switched to drive the primary motor by the switching unit after the

secondary motor has been stopped and the auxiliary unit which has been driven by the secondary motor is then driven by the engine, the auxiliary unit can be driven by the engine without any problem while the primary motor is
5 driven by the inverter so as to run the vehicle.

Additionally, according to the fifth aspect of the invention, since the secondary motor is at least any of the motor for driving a compressor for an air conditioner, the motor for driving an oil pump, and the motor for
10 starting up the engine, air conditioning, generating an oil pressure or starting up the engine can be implemented by the secondary motor.